



United States Department of Agriculture

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE
www.ars.usda.gov

"Solving Problems for the Growing World"

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement Number: ARS-X5E-0320
Demo/Alternative Merit
Promotion

Position Title/Series/Grade:
Horticultural Education Programs Specialist
GS-1701-07/09/11

Promotion Potential: GS-11

Employment Type: Full-time - Permanent

Grade and Salary Range:
GS-07 \$35,452.00 - \$46,088.00 Per Year
GS-09 \$43,365.00 - \$56,371.00 Per Year
GS-11 \$52,468.00 - \$68,209.00 Per Year

Location of Position:
U.S. National Arboretum, Education & Visitor Services
Unit, Washington, D.C.

Who Can Apply (You **must** include a statement in your application that you are a U.S. citizen to be considered for this position): All U.S. Citizens

Opening Date: August 29, 2005

Closing Date: September 23, 2005

For copies of vacancy announcements and/or application materials, please call (301) 504-1482. For additional information regarding employment opportunities, please visit <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/jobs/apply.htm>.

Contact Information

Human Resources Specialist:
Tricia Higgins
(301) 504-1393

DC Relay Service: (202) 855-1234 (TDD)

Send Applications to:
USDA, Agricultural Research Service
Human Resources Division
Attn: Tricia Higgins
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop 5104
Beltsville, MD 20705-5104
Fax: (301) 504-1535
E-mail: scirecruit@ars.usda.gov

Applications must be postmarked, e-mailed or faxed by the closing date of the announcement. Applications received in Government envelopes will not be considered.

Please take advantage of the Application Package Checklist at the end of this announcement to ensure your application is complete.

For information about the organization and location, visit the location's website at .

Applications will also be accepted from USDA Surplus and Federal Displaced Employees in the commuting area.

The work of this position will require occasional weekend and evening hours as programming schedule demands.

Major Duties:

The purpose of this position is to develop and coordinate the scheduling and implementation of public fee-based and free educational programs in horticultural and other related science areas such as botany, plant sciences, natural resources conservation, environmental sciences, etc., at the U.S. National Arboretum. At the target GS-11 level, you will be responsible for planning, developing, coordinating and implementing the Arboretum's fee-based and free horticultural education programs, including symposia, lectures, classes, workshops, and demonstrations in the fields of gardening, horticulture, botany, conservation, and the environmental sciences. Programs will range from those of general interest to the lay public to specialized offerings tailored for professionals in the nursery trade and other horticultural and scientific professionals to continuing education units (CEUs) and certificate programs. Duties will include analyzing program data to identify trends and make recommendations on changes and/or new programming; obtaining speakers and presenters; determining program costs to ensure programs are self-supporting; coordinating logistics of individual offerings; marketing the programs; and evaluating program activities. In addition, you will also develop and disseminate information to the public, news media, interest groups and others concerning the educational programs of the Arboretum, such as press releases, program descriptions for the Calendar of Events and web page, pamphlets, and brochures. You will also use various software applications, such as word processing, electronic mail, spreadsheets, presentation software and databases to produce documents, develop presentations, and manage various aspects of the program.

Qualifications Required: Your education and experience will be evaluated against all qualification requirements (basic and any additional requirements) listed below.

Basic Requirements

You must have either:

(A) a degree that included or was supplemented by major study in education or in a subject-matter field appropriate to this position (i.e., horticulture, botany, plant sciences, natural resources, conservation, environmental science, or other directly related science); OR

(B) a combination of education and experience where you have courses equivalent to a major in education, or the sciences as noted in (A), plus appropriate experience or additional course work that provided knowledge comparable to that normally acquired through the successful completion of a four-year degree program as described previously in (A).

If qualifying all or in part based on your education, please submit a copy of your college transcripts OR a list of college courses with credit hours, dates completed, and grades received. If this information is not provided, your education may not be appropriately evaluated and you may lose consideration for this position. If your qualifications are based in any part on education and you are selected for this position, you will have to provide an official copy of your academic transcripts prior to entering on duty.

Additional Requirements:

For the GS-7 level:

One full year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-05 level in the federal service, OR completion of 1 year of graduate-level education directly related to this position, OR superior academic achievement at the undergraduate level.

For the GS-9 level: One full year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-07 level in federal service, OR completion of 2 years of progressively higher level graduate education

leading to a master's degree or possess a master's or equivalent graduate degree in a subject-matter area related to the work of this position (i.e., education, horticulture, or the plant sciences).

For the GS-11 level: One full year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-09 level in federal service, OR completion of 3 years of progressively higher level graduate education leading to a Ph.D. degree or PH.D. or equivalent doctoral degree in a subject-matter related to the work of this position. (i.e., education, horticulture, or the plant sciences)..

Time-In-Grade Restrictions apply for all candidates considered under Merit Promotion/Alternative Merit Promotion.

Specialized Experience - experience which has equipped you with the following Knowledge, Skills and Abilities - 'KSAs' required to perform the duties of this position:

1. Knowledge of horticulture and/or related sciences, such as botany, ecology, environmental science, natural resources and plant conservation, or other related sciences to plan and evaluate effective education programs and course materials.

2. Knowledge of the basic principles of formal and informal education, such as a variety of learning styles, in order to plan and evaluate effective educational programs.

3. (For the GS-7 level): Skill in organizing workshops, seminars, conferences, meetings, and/or lectures.

(For the GS9/11 levels): Skill in organizing workshops, seminars, conferences, meetings and lectures in the area of science in both informal and formal settings.

4. Ability to write and edit a variety of products for public use, such as media releases and horticultural information.

5. Ability to gather and evaluate data, draw conclusions, and propose action.

6. For the GS-09/11 levels only: Knowledge of basic budget functions to prepare financial plans and budgets, develop cost analyses of fee-based programs, and to review status of funds.

Other Important Information

Benefits Package:

A Benefits Package is authorized for this position. Additional information about Federal benefits can be obtained at www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm.

Veteran's Preference:

For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 703-724-1850 or TDD 978-461-8404. Select General Information on the Federal Employment Policies and Procedures, and then Veterans Preference and Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans. Visit their VetGuide website at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>.

Relocation Expenses:

Payment of relocation expenses will be determined in accordance with P&P 412.5, Recruitment and Retention Incentives and Other Special Pay, Sections 6 and 7, as amended by Bulletins 03-402 and 05-412.5, which may be found at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/412-05.htm#H10>. See also http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing_recruit/reloweb.htm.

Financial Disclosure Requirement:

Federal employees are subject to prohibitions against officially dealing with outside organizations in which they have a financial interest. You may be required to submit a financial disclosure report if hired for this position.

False statements:

If you make a false statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; may be fired after beginning work; or may be fined or jailed.

Optional Form 306, (Declaration for Federal Employment):

If you are selected for this position, you will be required to complete this form before an offer may be made.

USDA Surplus/Federal Displaced Employees:

USDA Surplus/Federal displaced employees must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well qualified surplus and displaced employees within the local commuting area will receive selection priority as provided by OPM regulations. Well-qualified means the applicant meets the basic qualification and eligibility requirements and all selective placement factors; is rated above minimally qualified against the KSAs or quality criteria; and is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry. Applicants must submit the following:

- 1) a copy of your RIF Separation Notice or Certification of Expected Separation or other documentation indicating that you are a surplus employee;
- 2) evidence of full performance level of current position;
- 3) a copy of your most recent performance appraisal; and
- 4) a copy of your most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, to verify reassignment eligibility.

Selective Service System:

Males over age 18 who were born after December 31, 1959, must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for Federal employment.

Reasonable Accommodation:

Reasonable accommodation may be provided to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, or have questions regarding reasonable accommodation and/or accessibility for any part of the application and hiring process, please contact the Disability Program Manager on 202-720-6161 or through the DC Relay Service on 202-855-1234 (TDD). The decision to grant reasonable accommodation is made on a case-by-case basis.

Civil Rights Policy Statement:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity employer and provider. Discrimination is prohibited in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center on 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD).

Application Package Checklist

If application packages do not contain all of the requested information, you may lose consideration for the job. To help you ensure your application fully outlines your qualifications and eligibility for this position, please submit the following documentation.

- ☐ Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment), SF-171 (Application for Federal Employment), Resume, Curriculum Vitae, or other document outlining your qualifications (Go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to obtain the OF-612).

The following information is required of all applicants:

- ☐ Announcement number, title, and grade(s) of the position
- ☐ Full name, mailing address (including zip code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)
- ☐ Social security number
- ☐ Statement that you are a U.S. citizen (if not using the OF-612 or SF-171)
- ☐ Copy of DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) (if claiming veterans preference) (Visit the following web site for additional information:
<http://www.opm.gov/employ/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>)
- ☐ SF-15 (Application for 10-point Veteran's Preference) plus the support documentation required by this form (if claiming 10-point veterans preference) (Go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.asp> to obtain form.)
- ☐ Paid and non-paid work experience related to the position. For each period of work experience include:
 - ___ Job title
 - ___ Series/grade (if Federal employment)
 - ___ Duties and accomplishments
 - ___ Employer's name and address
 - ___ Supervisor's name and contact information
 - ___ Starting and ending dates of employment (at least month & year)
 - ___ Number of hours worked per week
 - ___ Salary
 - ___ Indicate if we may contact current supervisor/employer
- ☐ Other job related information, such as training courses (title & year); skills (e.g., other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, etc.)
 - ___ Certificates/licenses (current)
 - ___ Honors, awards, and special accomplishments
 - ___ Supplemental questionnaire if applicable (usually for Federal Wage System positions - WG, WL, WS)
- ☐ Copy of college transcripts (if qualifying all or in part on the basis of education for this position) (If you have non-conventional education, e.g., foreign study, continuing education units, life experience, etc., go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e4.htm#e4a> and look under the heading

“Other Education” for information governing acceptability of this type of education.)

- ☐ Copy of SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action) to verify possession of competitive civil service status (if you are a current or previous federal employee)
- ☐ Copy of most recent performance appraisal (if you are a current federal employee)
- ☐ Second copy of application package (if the position is open to candidates outside the federal government AND if you are a current federal employee or a candidate with reinstatement eligibility and wish to be considered under both merit promotion and competitive examining procedures).
- ☐ Support documentation for eligibility for special hiring authorities, such as disability, Peace Corps service, etc. (If you have questions about whether you are eligible for a particular hiring authority, please call the servicing HR specialist or visit the web site at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/a2.htm> and scroll down to the subject heading, “Category”.)
- ☐ Support documentation if you are a USDA surplus or federal displaced employee (See pertinent section under “Other Important Information” below.)
- ☐ Self-certification of typing speed (if required as a basic qualification for the position)
- ☐ While not required, a separate response to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs listed under Specialized Experience) and Selective Placement Factor(s), if present, for this position may better highlight your specific qualifications for this position. (For an explanation of KSAs, go to the web site at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers/whatksa.html>).

If this is your first time applying for a federal job, or if you wish to view more detailed information about various aspects of applying for federal jobs, go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to access the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Form 510.